IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claims 1 and 7 and cancel claims 3-6, 11-14, 101, 103, 104, 125 and 127-130 without prejudice or admission as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. (currently amended) A near-field optical head comprising:

a planar substrate having a first surface, a second surface disposed opposite to the first surface, and an inverted conical or pyramidal hole extending through the first and second surfaces, the inverted conical or pyramidal hole ~~and~~ having at least one fine aperture formed at an apex thereof and disposed in the first surface and having at least one curved slant surface;

an optical waveguide disposed directly on the second surface of the planar substrate for propagating light along an optical path; and

a mirror disposed in the optical waveguide for bending in the direction of the fine aperture the optical path of the light propagated through the optical waveguide.

2. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 1; wherein the optical waveguide extends into the inverted conical or pyramidal hole.

3. - 6. (canceled).

7. (currently amended) A near-field optical head according to claim [~~6,~~] 1; wherein the curved slant surface decreases in slant degree toward the fine aperture.

8. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 7; wherein the mirror or the optical waveguide focuses light to the fine aperture or collimates light from the fine aperture.

9. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 8; wherein the optical waveguide comprises a core and a clad disposed over the core.

10. - 119. (canceled).

120. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 1; wherein the optical waveguide is integrally connected to the second surface of the planar substrate.

121. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 1; wherein the near-field optical head is an air floating-type optical head.

122. (previously presented) A near-field optical head according to claim 1; wherein the optical waveguide is bonded to the second surface of the planar substrate.

123. - 130. (canceled).